

REMARKS

OF

MESSRS. CLEMENS, BUTLER, AND JEFFERSON DAVIS,

ON

THE VERMONT RESOLUTIONS RELATING TO SLAVERY.

DELIVERED

IN SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES, JANUARY 10, 1850.

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1850.

## REMARKS OF MR. CLEMENS.

The Senate proceeded to the unfinished business, being the resolutions from the General Assembly of the State of Vermont, which were presented on Tuesday last by Mr. UPHAM, as follows:

*Resolved, by the Senate and House of Representatives, That slavery is a crime against humanity, and a sore evil in the body politic; that was excused in the framers of the Federal Constitution as a crime entailed upon the country by their predecessors, and tolerated solely as a thing of inexorable necessity.*

*Resolved, That the so-called "compromises of the Constitution" restrained the Federal Government from interfering with slavery only in the States in which it then existed, and from interference with the slave trade only for a limited time, which has long since expired; and that the powers conferred upon Congress by the Constitution to suppress the slave trade, to regulate commerce between the States, to govern the Territories, and to admit new States—powers conferred with an express intention "to form a more perfect union, establish justice, insure domestic tranquillity, provide for the common defence, promote the general welfare, and secure the blessings of liberty to ourselves and our posterity"—may all rightfully be used so as to prevent the extension of slavery into territory now free, and to abolish slavery and the slave trade wherever either exists under the jurisdiction of Congress.*

*Resolved, That our Senators and Representatives in Congress be requested to resist by all and every constitutional means the extension of slavery in any manner, whether by the annexation to slaveholding Texas of territory now free, or by the admission to the Union of territory already acquired, or which may be hereafter acquired, without an express prohibition of slavery, either in the constitution of each new State asking admission, or in the act of Congress providing for such admission.*

*Resolved, further, That our Senators and Representatives in Congress be requested to support every just and prudent measure for the exclusion of slavery from the District of Columbia; for the entire suppression of the slave trade on the high seas, and wherever else Congress has jurisdiction; and generally to relieve the Federal Government from all responsibility for the existence, maintenance, or tolerance of slavery, or the traffic in slaves.*

*Resolved, further, That our Senators in Congress be instructed, and our Representatives requested, to use their exertions for the speedy organization of a territorial government for New Mexico and California, with a provision forever excluding involuntary servitude, except for crime, therefrom.*

*Resolved, That the Governor be requested to furnish a copy of the foregoing resolutions to each of our Senators and Representatives in Congress, and to the Governor of each State in the Union.*

Approved November 12, 1849.

Mr. CLEMENS. I voted the other day against the motion to lay the question of printing these resolutions upon the table, not from any respect for the body who adopted them, or any desire to extend a courtesy to those who could so far forget what was due to the people of the southern States, and to their own characters, as to clothe such sentiments in such language. But I agree with the Senator from South Carolina [Mr. BUTLER] that the people of the South ought to be acquainted with northern feeling. I desire these resolutions printed for another reason: I wish to show my constituents that the declarations so often and so earnestly made that

the North does not intend to interfere with slavery where it exists is entirely false, and intended only to deceive. This game has been played with some success heretofore, and I should consider myself very culpable if I did not now expose it. It is true, we still have the declaration of Senators that all interference with slavery in the States is foreign to their purposes, but it is asking too much of our credulity to expect us to believe such statements when they are accompanied by the introduction of resolutions directly contradicting their assertions. These resolutions do not stop at the same point with the Senator from Ohio, [Mr. CHASE.] They go far beyond the ground he has taken. They assert that the so-called compromises of the Constitution restrict interference with slavery only in the States in which it existed at the time of the adoption of that instrument. And, according to the doctrine here avowed, Congress has the power to abolish slavery in Alabama, or in any other State admitted since the adoption of the Constitution. Another and a bolder step has been taken in the march of aggression. Another mask has been removed and another deformity revealed. I am ready, therefore, to vote for the printing of any number of these resolutions, for the purpose of distributing them among the people of the South. It is time we understood this question, and knew what we shall be called upon to resist. So far as my action goes, that knowledge shall not be withheld.

We have never asked anything at your hands beyond a strict adherence to the Constitution. We have never proposed any interference with your domestic relations. We have not assumed a censorship over your morals. We have asked from you no boon, and desired nothing but non-interference with the rights secured to us by the Constitution, and for the maintenance of which your fathers solemnly and deliberately pledged their faith. Surely these are not hard conditions. Nothing but the most determined spirit of intermeddling—nothing but the most reckless disregard of consequences, or the most profound contempt for all the warnings we have given, could induce the northern people to persist in the mad career they have been running for the last fifteen years. When the future historian records the events of that period, in no matter how truthful and simple language, will posterity believe the story? Will those who are to come after us believe it possible that a whole people, from a mere spirit of aggression, without a motive apart from the pleasure which the tyrant always feels in the infliction of a wrong, have madly torn to pieces the most glorious fabric ever erected by human hands? The miserable plea that you are actuated by a desire to improve

the morals of the South, and the equally miserable affectation of special devotion to the cause of humanity, will soon be forgotten, or remembered only as an evidence of the deep hypocrisy of which human nature is sometimes capable. Your acts and your motives must both be reviewed by a tribunal which cannot fail to pronounce them something worse than insane. When the fountain first bubbled into day, its waters were supplied by folly; but the stream has gathered in its course so much of hypocrisy and wickedness, that we are constrained to detest what at first we only despised.

The value of the slave property in the southern States exceeds nine hundred millions of dollars. No people ever existed, or ever will exist, who would consent to the destruction of this vast wealth without a long and desperate struggle; and can it be possible that you dream of effecting its destruction by peaceful means, when you have to deal with a race constitutionally brave, even to rashness, and as prone to resentment as "the sparks to fly upwards?" Or do you indulge that other delusion, that it is in your power to compel submission? If either of these fancies have taken possession of the northern mind, take my advice, and be in some haste to expel it. The most dangerous *ignis fatuus* that ever lured a wanderer by night into a deadly quagmire is harmless when compared with such a guide.

Suppose we had no motive to resist abolition agitation save the powerful one of protecting our property: would you, if the picture were reversed, hesitate one moment about the adoption of the most extreme measures? Would you have borne what we have already submitted to? What would be your conduct, if, year after year, we flooded this hall with petitions to burn down your factories? If, year after year, we insulted you with resolutions, passed by State Legislatures, declaring that the system of white slavery, which undeniably exists in your manufactories and elsewhere, is offensive to the moral sense of the South, and one from which it became a Christian people to divorce themselves? Suppose we reminded you of the pauperism and crime in your great cities; of the bands of juvenile vagrants "pilfering whenever opportunity offers, and begging when they cannot steal;" of the parents driving their children forth, the sons to commit felonies, and the daughters to prostitution.\* All these things we might urge with far more justice than belongs to any of your complaints against us. But would you bear it? would you tolerate such petitions, or listen with patience to such resolutions? If you did, you would belie the character which the world has given to the Yankee States.

The Senator from Ohio says that he is not to be deterred by menaces of disunion, from pursuing the course he has marked out for himself. I have no wish to deter him. I want him and other northern men to come up boldly, and do what they tell us their constituents have demanded. I make no menaces, but I insist that the Senators from Vermont obey the instructions of their Legislature, and introduce the bills they are there required to introduce. I borrow the language of a mem-

ber in the other end of the Capitol, and tell them to "come up and face the music." Do not dodge the question. Do not attempt to get rid of it by indirection, but stand up, as the representatives of freemen ought to do, and look it in the face. If you are right, or believe yourselves so, persevere. If you are wrong, but yet believe you can commit that wrong with impunity, keep on. We have a lesson in store for you which may be severe, but will certainly be useful.

The South, Mr. President, disclaims the language of menace, but it is nevertheless due to all parties that her deliberate purposes should be plainly announced. We do not intend to stand still and have our throats cut because the butcher chooses to soothe us under the operation with honeyed words. You can deceive us no longer by the catchwords "conciliation and harmony." Nor can our voices be stilled by the fear of incurring the reproach of imprudence. I said the other day, and I repeat now, that the time for prudential action has gone by. It is this *prudence*, of which we have heard so much, that has brought us to the situation in which we now are. It is this constant talking about prudential action which has induced the people of the North to believe that we do not intend to resist.

There is a point at which *prudence* changes from a virtue to a vice, and it often happens that it is used only as another name for cowardice. It is not to be wondered at if our good brethren of the North have mistaken the one for the other, and have thus found courage to persist in a crusade which promised to be unattended with danger. I know not if they will thank me for undeceiving them, but it is my habit to deal plainly with all men, and I now proclaim that you have reached the utmost limit to which you can go. There is a line beyond which you must not pass. You have marched up to it, and now cross it if you dare. I do not say this to intimidate. I do not believe it will have that effect. On the contrary, I believe with the Senator from South Carolina, [MR. CALHOUN,] that this movement *will run its course*, and end, as all similar things have ended, in blood and tears. The demagogues of the North have raised a tempest they cannot control. It is impelling them onwards with an irresistible force—they can neither recede nor stand still; and, however fearful may be the path before them, it is one they must tread. For a miserable partisan purpose they have excited and kept alive bitter sectional jealousies, and burning hatreds, which are now bringing forth deadly fruits. "They have sown the wind, and must reap the whirlwind." In the history of nations there are frequently periods when the statesman feels himself borne along upon a turbulent tide to an unknown port. A curtain is drawn between him and the future which his utmost sagacity fails to penetrate. But that period is past with us. Fold after fold of the curtain has been rolled away, and the view beyond is neither dim nor indistinct. He who cannot now trace out step by step each successive event of the future, has learned but little from the past history of mankind, and is ill fitted to be the lawgiver of a nation. The North will not save the Union, and the South cannot, unless indeed we submit to indignities and wrongs of so degrading a character as would almost make our fathers "burst the ceremonies of the tomb," and come among us once more

\* These facts are taken from the "Report of the Chief of Police," New York, commencing May 1st and ending October 31, 1849.

to denounce and disown the degenerate descendants who had disgraced a glorious ancestry. We know well what we have to expect. Northern demands have assumed a form which it is impossible for us to misunderstand. First comes our exclusion from the territories. Next abolition in the District of Columbia—in the forts, arsenals, dock-yards, &c. Then the prohibition of the slave trade between the States; and, finally, total abolition. These results are just as certain, unless the first step is firmly resisted, as that the sun will rise to-morrow, and the night will follow his going down. Heretofore it has been pretended that it was not the purpose of any considerable body at the North to interfere with slavery in the States; but this is an illusion which these resolutions have come in good time to dispel. I always knew it was false, but I did not expect to see the cloak so soon thrown aside. But even if it were true, I would still say I do not choose to place myself at your mercy. I will not exchange the fortifications which the Constitution has thrown around my rights for a frail reliance on your generosity or your forbearance. Concession never yet satisfied fanaticism, nor has the march of the wrong-doer ever been stayed by the supplications of the sufferer. Situated as we are, the impulse of manliness is the dictate of prudence. Our duty and our obvious policy alike demand that we should meet the danger on the threshold, and fall or conquer there. It is of no consequence by what name you choose to designate your aggressions. When a principle is established which must bring not only poverty but desolation and death to the South, it is immaterial whether you call it abolition, free soil, or, to use the phrase of the Senator from Ohio, free democracy; the end is the same, and so should be the resistance also. When the fall of the outworks must be followed by the fall of the citadel, he is a poor commander who hesitates to risk everything in their defence. It is so with us; we cannot yield an inch of the ground we now occupy without compromising our safety, and, what is worse, incurring the reproach of eternal infamy. None but children can be imposed upon by the miserable delusion that abolition will pause in the midst of its successes. One triumph will pave the way to another, until the wildest dream of fanaticism becomes a reality. I understand the policy of the North, as avowed in the other end of the Capitol, is to urge but one measure at the time; to proceed step by step, and to hide as much as possible from the public eye all future results. That would indeed be a shrewd game, and one well-worthy of the brain that conceived it; but, unfortunately for its success, there are more fingers than one in the pie; there are too many demagogues to control, and the sentiment they have awakened among the honest but misguided masses is too impatient of restraint to await a process so slow and so fatiguing. They have been taught to believe that every hour slavery continues on the continent detracts from their chances of salvation, and that its abolition has been specially intrusted to them by God himself. No wonder they go beyond the knives who have duped them. No wonder they refuse to listen to prudent counsels, and demand prompt action, at whatever sacrifice of life or property to themselves or others. It is human nature—above all, it is the nature of the fanatic.

But a few years since we were told that the right

of petition was all they designed to secure. Success has added boldness to their demands, and even those who claim to be moderate and conservative men talk with uplifted hands of the horrors of slavery, and expect us to be very grateful when they promise to postpone the work of robbery and murder yet a little longer.

The Senator from Ohio, before taking his seat in this body, addressed a remarkable letter to one of his constituents, and he has to-day reiterated the sentiments it contained. He claims to be a Democrat, and avers that abolition constitutes a portion of the creed. Sir, the Senator from Ohio and myself have studied it in different schools. I think I know something of the faith which Jefferson taught, and Madison and Jackson illustrated. I understand it to inculcate a strict construction of the Constitution, and a total abstinence from the exercise of any doubtful power. This is the whole creed, summed up in a single sentence, and it needs no elaboration. Let us try the doctrine of free democracy by this simple test. Where is the constitutional provision which gives to Congress the power to legislate upon the subject of slavery in the Territories or elsewhere? I maintain that it is not to be found in that instrument, and that there is no granted power from which it can be implied. It follows, then, that the exercise of the power must be anti-democratic, and free democracy degenerates into the purest federalism. But I do not choose to base my argument upon this ground alone. If Congress possessed the power, its exercise would be unjust and iniquitous—so unjust as to call for resistance “at every hazard and to the last extremity.” The Senate must pardon me for asking, upon what principle of natural equity, aside from any question of constitutional right, the northern States rest their claim to exclusive possession of the Territories? Did their treasure purchase the national domain? Was their blood alone poured out to acquire it? Or did it come down as an exclusive inheritance to them? I appeal to the history of the country, from the earliest dawn of the Revolution to the close of our latest struggle, for an answer. The money which has been paid for the Territories was raised by duties upon imports, levied notoriously and designedly for the protection of the North, and paid almost entirely by the South. Instead of a burden to you, it has been a bonus. How stands the account of personal services? It was a southern man who pointed out the road from bondage to independence; who led you triumphantly through the perils of a seven years’ war, and sternly refused the diadem with which a grateful soldiery would have crowned him. It was a southern general and southern soldiers who breasted the British bayonets at New Orleans, and added one of its brightest chapters to the history of the Republic. Southern blood has watered every plain from the St. Lawrence to the capital of the Aztecs. The memorable fields of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma were won by a southern general. It was before the genius of a southern leader that the walls and towers of Monterey crumbled into dust, and two southern regiments, struggling side by side in a glorious rivalry, snatched from the cannon’s mouth the palm of victory. In the narrow gorge of Angostura, southern valor again stemmed the tide of war, and rolled back the murderous charges of the foe. On the sands of Vera Cruz another great name which the South has

given to history and renown, added to a fame already imperishable, and wrung from the reluctant nations of the Old World plaudits which they could not withhold. At Cerro Gordo the story of southern achievements was re-written in blood, and among the rocks and volcanoes of Contreras the glorious old Palmetto State vindicated her right to the title of chivalrous, and silenced forever the tongues of her detractors. Sir, I mean to indulge in no disparagement of the North. She has furnished gallant men who have done their duty nobly upon the field. I would not, if I could, tear a single laurel from her brow. But I claim that the record gives to us at least an equality of the common dangers, the common sufferings, and the common triumphs, and I demand an equal participation in the rights they have established. The Senator from Ohio considers this an enormous pretension. Why is it enormous? It can only be because, in his view, repeated submission has sanctified aggression, and the successful perpetration of one wrong fully justifies another. Sir, however enormous it may be, I can tell the Senator it is a pretension we do not mean to abandon. We have yielded time after time to northern encroachment. We have suffered one violation of the Constitution to follow another, until we began to lose our own self-respect. But, thank God, a different spirit is now abroad in the land; and the descendants of those who fought at Eutaw, at Guilford, at the Cowpens, and at King's Mountain, are beginning to manifest something of the old revolutionary blood. Repeated aggressions have forced us to recall many things we would willingly have forgotten, and new demands cannot fail to remind us of what has already been granted. Perhaps it may not be altogether without its uses to recall some striking events in the history of the past. I suppose it has not escaped the memory of the Senator from Ohio, that the whole northwestern territory, now constituting the States of Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin, was originally slave territory. It was ceded to the Confederacy by the magnanimity of Virginia, and you have manifested your gratitude by fostering upon its bosom a population who are now ready to sting to death their benefactors. In 1803 we acquired Louisiana, and of all that vast region you excluded us by the Missouri compromise from something like four-fifths of the whole, and appropriated it exclusively to yourselves. And this, be it remembered, was slave territory; not an acre of it came into the Confederacy free. In 1819 we acquired Florida and Oregon, and of this the South got 59,000 square miles, and the North 341,000; making in all something like 1,000,000 of square miles which the North has seized more than the South. We have submitted to this wholesale robbery with a patience that Job might have envied. Actuated by an anxious desire to preserve every bond of the Union unbroken, and every memory of the Revolution unembittered, we have pocketed the wrong, and taken the wrong-doers to our bosoms. But this magnification of christian forbearance on our part has not purchased the exemption it was intended to secure. You now claim the whole territory acquired in the war with Mexico, and not only this, but the half of Texas besides. History, sir, has but one parallel case. It is that of Brennus casting his sword and belt into the scale, and I, for one, am ready to reply in the lan-

guage of Camillus, "it is the custom with us Romans to ransom our country not with gold, but with iron."

It has become the fashion to answer every complaint made by the South with appeals in favor of the Union, and there are not wanting ready tongues and readier pens to denounce all those who dare to calculate its value. Without professing to be any bolder than other men, I have yet enough of moral and physical courage to defy all such senseless clamors. The Union is valuable only for the privileges it confers and the rights it secures. When the government is so administered as to oppress and grind down one portion of the Confederacy, it ceases to be an object of veneration to me, and I am ready to rend asunder its firmest bonds. If you desire us to remain in the Union, deal with us justly and fairly. If you wish to preserve a community of interests, act in such a manner as to win back that kindly confidence you have done so much to forfeit. Until this is done, it is worse than idle to talk to me of the glories of the Union. That glory which is purchased by the degradation of the South, and enjoyed only amid insult and oppression, has no charms for me. Yet I would not have the Senate to understand that I am insensible to all the advantages which we have derived, and might still derive, from such a Union as our fathers contemplated. Give me that Union. Restore that constitution which has been so mournfully disfigured, and I will follow its banner through every peril humanity can face. But what reverence can you expect a southern man to entertain for a Union which is known to him chiefly through the insults it has sanctioned and the wrongs it has legalized.

The Senator from Ohio asks what grounds we have of complaint. The list of grievances is a long one, and the patience of the Senate would be exhausted if I attempted to recount them all. I will, however, remind him of some of the many claims the people of the North have established to our gratitude. They have established clubs throughout the North for the dissemination of pamphlets and other incendiary publications among our slaves, in which the foulest libels upon our citizens are mingled with the most terrible appeals to all the worst passions of the slave. Murder is boldly advocated, and the burning of our dwellings and the violation of our wives and daughters held up as a venial offence. They have formed combinations to steal and run away our property. They have hired lecturers whose sole business it is to inflame the public mind at the North against us. Enactment after enactment is crowded into your statute books to hinder, delay, and defraud the southern man in the prosecution of his constitutional rights. Your courts of justice have been converted into the vilest instruments of oppression, and, when other means have failed to accomplish a robbery, riot and murder have been freely resorted to. Even your pulpits have become the sanctuaries of slander, and the temples dedicated to the worship of the living God have echoed and re-echoed to vile and base denunciations of our people and their institutions. Will you tell me that all this is the work of a few mad-brained fanatics? I answer that a few fanatics could not have given color to the legislation of thirteen States, and prevented the justice of their courts. No, sir, no. It is general, nay, almost universal, and whatever

magic there may be in that word "Union," it has no balm for wounds like these.

The Senator from Ohio says that he *only* designs to prohibit the slave trade between the States, and abolish slavery in this District, and other places where Congress has exclusive powers of legislation. He may well afford to pause at that point in his labors, for all beyond that will follow without an effort. Your forts, arsenals, and dock yards, would at once become cities of refuge for the slave, and the recovery of a fugitive would be utterly impracticable. But the resolutions now under consideration go very far beyond this, and there are not wanting other evidences of more determined purposes. I have here a speech delivered not very long since by the Senator from New York, [Mr. SEWARD,] and I propose to trouble the Senate with some extracts from it. Before doing so, however, let me say that I understand the Senators from Ohio and New Hampshire have excluded the Senator from New York from their political fellowship, and deny his right to be regarded as a true disciple of the Abolition church. This is a degree of rank injustice, against which I feel bound to enter my protest. The Senator from New York is entitled to a higher place in the synagogue than either of them; for he has avowed opinions and principles from which they shrink with unaffected repugnance. Even your merits, Mr. President, illustrious as they confessedly are upon this subject, must pale before the brighter glories which cluster around his brow. You are guilty of the criminal weakness of believing that the Constitution which you are sworn to support cannot be violated without some degree of moral delinquency, and while carrying on a warfare, pitiless and merciless, indeed, against our institutions, you yet acknowledge that there are barriers which cannot be broken down, and restraints which must be respected. The Senator from New York has emancipated himself from the thralldom of all such unmanly prejudices, and finds in the *virtue of the people*, and in the *Divine commandments*, his apology and his justification.

Hear him, and blush for your own feeble and timid advocacy of a cause which has awakened such emotions and called forth such sentiments:

"Slavery was once the sin of not some of the States only, but of them all; of not our nation only, but of all nations. It perverted and corrupted the moral sense of mankind deeply, universally; and this corruption became a universal habit. \* \* \* It is written in the Constitution of the United States that five slaves shall count equal to three freemen as a basis of representation; and it is written, also, in violation of the *Divine law*, that we shall surrender the fugitive slave who takes a refuge at our firesides from his relentless pursuer. You blush not at these things, because they have become as familiar as household words. \* \* \* What, then, you say; can nothing be done for freedom because the public conscience is inert? Yes, much can be done—everything can be done—slavery can be limited to its present bounds—it can be unelaborated—it can be and it must be abolished, and you and I can and must do it."

There is no evasion here. All is open, bold, and undisguised. We cannot misunderstand this language, and I trust that no one hereafter will ask us to believe that anything short of total abolition will satisfy northern agitators.

"But we must begin deeper and lower than in the composition and combination of fictions and parties, wherein the strength and security of slavery lie. You answer that it lies in the Constitution of the United States and the constitutions and laws of the slaveholding States. Not at all."

"Not at all." And yet the Senator has come into this Chamber and taken an oath to support and

defend that very Constitution which he had deliberately declared to be in violation of the Divine law, and which he had openly avowed his purpose to trample under foot.

"It is in the erroneous sentiment of the American people. Constitutions and laws can no more rise above the virtue of the people than the limpid stream can climb above its native spring. Inculcate the love of freedom and the equal rights of man under the paternal roof. See to it that they are taught in the schools and the churches. Reform your own code. Extend a cordial welcome to the fugitive who lays his weary limbs at your door, and defend him as you would your paternal gods. Correct your own errors that slavery has any constitutional guarantees which may not be released, and ought not to be relinquished. Say to slavery, when it shows its bond and demands its pound of flesh, if it draws one drop of blood, its life shall pay the forfeit."

If these were only the opinions of WILLIAM H. SEWARD, I should not have thought it necessary to trouble the Senate with what might then have been regarded as a very harmless exhibition of venomous propensities. But subsequent events have stamped them with an importance they never could have derived from him. He has since that period been clothed with Senatorial robes by the Empire State. He has been elected to the office he now holds with reference to this very matter, and we are bound to believe he truly reflects the will of the people whose representative he is. With him, therefore, I have nothing more to do. The responsibility has passed from his shoulders to that of more potent endorsers. And let me ask you, sir, in all sincerity, what respect you can entertain for the intellect of the South, when, with all these evidences at hand, you yet think it possible to deceive us. If, with speeches like these before us, and a knowledge of the rewards which have followed them, we had not been awakened to the magnitude of the coming danger, we should have deserved to bear the chains you have been forging for our arms.

I have no threats to make—they are out of time and place; but I tell you, more in sorrow than in anger, not only that you must pause, but that you must retract your steps. The guarantees of the Constitution must be respected, and its promises held sacred, or the most weak and timid man in the State I in part represent would scorn your alliance, and shatter your Confederacy. Indeed, I do not know but what it is now too late, and that this Union, over which you have preached so much, and about which so many eloquent sentences have been framed, is already at an end. Certainly you have severed many of its strongest ties, and but little more remains besides that formal separation which embittered feelings must soon render a necessity. You did enough to dissolve it when you commenced organized robberies of our property—when you murdered our citizens—when you violated every constitutional obligation, and forgot every tie which bound us together as a people. Reserve, then, your denunciations of disunion for yourselves. It is your act, and you can say nothing of each other so harsh as to be unjust.

Often, sir, have I stood in a valley and watched the sun as it descended behind the mountains. At morning and at noon the whole earth was bathed in a flood of glorious light, but as the great luminary of day traveled westward on his journey, shadow after shadow began to steal along the mountain side. As he sunk lower and lower, the shade gathered deeper and deeper, until the whole valley was covered with gloom and not a solitary beam lighted up the thick darkness which settled

upon it. Even so has it been with this Republic. Its earlier days were blessed with the glad light of a glorious prosperity; trials and difficulties like summer clouds rapidly melted away; hosts of invaders, in all the dread panoply of war, landed upon our shores, but they were swept off like insects by the wing of the tempest. Everything around us was brightness and security. After a while the great arch enemy of man evoked the spirit of abolition, and then slowly but surely the shadow and the night began to creep over the land. I have watched it as I have watched the shade on the mountain. What it has once gained it has never lost. The spot that has once grown dark has remained dark forever. Steadily and continually it has increased and deepened until it has spread above us a pall like that which hung over Jerusalem when the curses denounced by the prophets were about to be fulfilled. And am I now to be told that I must neglect all the warnings written on the canvas of the past, madly turn away from the contemplation of the future, and permit myself to be lulled into a fatal security by siren songs in favor of the Union? However much I may have loved that Union, I love the liberties of my native land far more, and you have taught me that they might become antagonists; that the existence of the one might be incompatible with the other. The conviction came but slowly, for it was not without its bitterness. As a boy I looked upon the Union as a holy thing, and worshipped it. As a man I have gone through that in its defence which would have shriveled thousands of the wretched silk-worms who, in peaceful times, earn a cheap reputation for patriotism by professing unbounded love for the Union. Even now I am not unmindful of all the glorious memories that we have in common; I do not forget that there has come down to us a rich inheritance of glory which is incapable of division. I know that side by side the North and the South struggled through the Revolution; that side by side their bloody footprints tracked the snow of Valley-Forge; that side by side they crossed the icy billows of the Delaware, and snatched from fate the victory at Trenton. I remember all the story of the times that tried men's souls, and feel the full strength of all the bonds it has woven around us. If they have been fearfully weakened, if they are now about to snap asunder, the sin and the folly belong not to us, but to those who have forced us to choose between chains and infamy on the one

hand, or equality and independence on the other. We are not the assailants, but the assailed; and it does not become him who maintains a just cause to calculate the consequences.

The Senator from Vermont [Mr. PHELPS] has undertaken to assert in substance that the whole world looked upon us with abhorrence, and that by upholding the institution of slavery we have placed ourselves beyond the pale of civilization. When the people of his own State, and their representatives here and elsewhere, give extraordinary evidences of uncommon morality and christianity, I may listen with patience to a lecture from him; but, as I do not understand that to be the case, I must be permitted to say that the man who could utter such charges against a whole people is not only reckless of what is due to the body of which he is a member, but gives the highest evidence that he is utterly ignorant of all the courtesies of life, and entirely beyond the pale of that civilization of which he speaks.

I hope I have satisfied the Senator from Ohio that our complaints are not altogether causeless. I have but little more to add. There are two classes of men who have brought this Government to the point at which we now stand—actuated by very different motives and principles, but equally culpable, and equally chargeable with the crime of treason to the land. The first is that band of northern fanatics who, regardless of right, regardless of the Constitution, forgetful of all past obligations, and of all moral and social ties, have excited and continued a wild and reckless warfare upon an institution of which they know nothing, and whose blessings or curses should have been alike indifferent to them. The second class is one for whom I have less respect, and of whom I always speak with less patience. It is that timid, hesitating, shrinking portion in our own section of the Union who are afraid to march up to the line—to meet the oppressor on the confines, and hurl him back the very moment his footstep presses forbidden ground. A great poet, in the story of his visit to the infernal regions, gives a description of certain souls which aptly applies to them. He found them outside the gates of Hell, and says:

"Here, with those caithiff angels, they abide  
Who stood aloof in Heaven—to God untrue,  
Yet wanting courage with his foes to side.  
Heaven cast them forth its beauty not to stain,  
And Hell refuses to receive them too;  
From them no glory could the damned obtain."

## REMARKS OF MR. BUTLER.

Mr. BUTLER said: I had no idea of taking any part in this debate, except so far as to suggest the propriety of printing the resolutions, intending to take another occasion to discuss the topics which have been brought under discussion in this unexpected debate. But, sir, the gentleman from Vermont, the other day, indulged in a very wide range of debate, so far as regards one of the subjects which he thought proper to bring within the scope of his remarks. He discussed all the doctrines connected with the organization of territorial government, and uttered many sentiments well calculated to arrest attention—such as seemed to provoke a reply.

The gentleman from Ohio, this morning, in a somewhat prepared effort, I think, has come forward, and has avowed doctrines which in their tendency and operation cannot be disguised, and, sir, while he has admonished us to cultivate harmony, and while he and others have given us homilies on the value of this Union, he has avowed sentiments, and not only on this occasion but on others, has inculcated doctrines, which will sow broadcast the seeds of discord—such as make odious and arrogant distinctions between different sections of this Confederacy. His doctrines would seem to aim at the disfranchisement of the southern section of the Union, both through the action

of the Federal Legislature and under the organization of parties. It is not mere sentiment, but a scheme that he insists on to carry out his plans of operation. He presumes on an increasing majority in the North and a minority in the South, as I shall show by his expressed sentiments. I cannot therefore allow him to preach decent moderation, when I know he has, with others, ultimate designs—designs which I will not allow him to disguise, under the forms and professions of moderation.

He avows openly that he will submit to no compromise, and will assimilate to no party that will not recognize as a basis the free-soil principles; in other words, to form a party to be known as free democracy—a party that puts under the ban slaveholders as tainted partners in the association. He speaks of the South as having held the offices of the Confederacy, and he avows doctrines that will hereafter, by way of retaliation, disfranchise them in the future unless they shall come to terms to be prescribed on the basis which he has taken for party organization. I have now a letter before me, which I shall have occasion to refer to, by way of verifying all that I have said; a letter in which he openly avows his reliance on the minority of southern interests, and, according to my view, on southern defection; what he calls desertion, I would call treason. His self-sustaining numerical strength I suspect is at the bottom of his sublime political morality. He aims at certainty on the disposition of submission by the South to the doctrines which he has avowed. Confidence has been inspired by the desire of the South to preserve the Union, and its past history somewhat sanctions the assumption. Summed up in a few words, he calculates upon the unconditional submission of one section in accommodating itself to the organization of parties to be made exclusively by another section; with kind and gentle allowances, however, for desertion from the southern ranks for the sake of the prizes of office. But, sir, for fear I might do the honorable gentleman injustice, I will, before I sit down, read extracts from a letter, which seems to have been prepared by him with the care of one avowing a solemn creed. It is a creed that sears to the heavens in its doctrines, but looks to the earth for its rewards. Philanthropy prescribes the latitude of its boundaries, whilst selfishness contracts the scope of its operation; a philanthropy whose center is everywhere, and whose circumference is nowhere, but whose practice is to be found in the sordid appropriation of office and property.

But allow me to say I am naturalist enough to know that it is not the purest bird that flies the highest. It is said of the condor that it alights in the rare and cold atmosphere of the snow-capped Andes; and yet it is a bird of obscene propensities, and feeds on the corruptions of the earth. These gentlemen, who are so sublime in their morality, when they descend from the elevation which their theory aspires to, to the practical application of their doctrines, are ready to deprive us of the soil that has been won by the common blood and common treasure of the country—are ready to appropriate to themselves the offices and their emoluments, under the organization of parties, and under the fraudulent forms of legislation to effect an odious inequality. Even Federal eligibility to office has been assailed, if it should be claimed by a southern man.

Sir, they go further, and tell you in so many words, that acquiescence in their propositions will not satisfy them; for that was the true import of the language of the Senator from New Hampshire. He says, that concessions that have taken place, swell the spirit of fanaticism; that it has an ideal excellence which will not compromise with anything but the sublimity of an unlimited morality. They are to attain this point by progressive aggression, and to hold those who defend their rights as responsible for the Union. Those who have done the wrong have no right to assign the position of the parties to the issue. The South has never assailed the Union; they have cherished it and made all the compromises to preserve it; and I say now, the northern gentlemen hold the scissors of its fate in their own hands. They can close them on the cords of this Union by going on in their reckless aggression, or stay their hand and do justice. They are the moving parties, and in Jupiter Stator they may find a deity worthy of worship; but if they go on, they may presume too much on the arts of Mercury. The course which has been advertised is a rebuking commentary on southern acquiescence in wrongful aggression. Those who have been guilty of the wrong shall not hold me liable for the consequences, nor shall they assign me a position to the issues which they have made. If they have brought the Union in jeopardy, they shall not throw the odium of disunionists on the defending and innocent party. Politicians have played with this subject as an element of political game, and that game shall have the true parties to it.

I say it now, and with perfect sincerity and candor, that the people of the State which I represent, and the people of the southern States in general, have never taken measures thus far with the view or wish that they should result in disunion. I go further, and say that their acquiescence in compromise is a refutation of the charges that have been made against them. What compromise that did not require a sacrifice of right and honor has not been acceded to on the part of the South? What compromise that she entered into has she violated? These are questions that may be obviated by evasion or denunciation of a self-sustaining majority, but honesty will only answer them before the tribunal of history. The past cannot be changed, and it will go to show that the South has made sacrifices to form the Union, and have submitted to unequal compromises to preserve it. The North has presumed on that love of union to sanction their progressive and arrogant pretensions. No, sir, the history of the Confederacy, and especially the history of this question, will show a degree of submission to compromise that astonishes me in the review of it. I shall not go further than to speak of the history of this question with my connection with it. It has suggested new and mischievous elements of sectional and selfish policy, alien to the whole spirit of the Constitution, and the love of justice which inspired its life. Will the gentleman inform me what measure of compromise has ever been proposed to us, if it were an honorable and just compromise, that has been rejected by us? When it was proposed to extend the Missouri compromise to the Pacific, by whom was that proposition made? It was made by one side, and promptly and even scornfully rejected by the other. It was refused, even with the wantonness of rejec-



tion. It was refused on the assumption that some of our own men would join in the repudiation. By implication that compromise has been supposed to give to the South, in all territories south of 36° 30' entire control. Whilst it in terms excluded slavery north of that line, it recognized the right that it should exist, if the people thought proper, south of that line. Experience has shown that the temptation to disregard it depended on the power of doing so, to operate on a minority made so by its operation. It has served the office of taking power from the South and placing it in the hands of those who have not magnanimity and justice to observe its obligations. It has been but a dam of sand that has given way to the tide of insolent power. When the questions growing out of a proposition to give governments to our Mexican acquisitions assumed a critical aspect, an honorable effort, without regard to sections, was made to settle them forever, and to take them out of the arena of political gamesters. That effort resulted in the Clayton bill. It was framed to save the honor of the South. Many thought her rights were not secure under it. I will not state its terms. It proposed an honorable compromise, without improper concession. What has been its fate? The South generally acquiesced in it; and I solemnly believe, for the sake of the Union. Does this look like a desire or design to dissolve this Confederacy? No, sir, it was anything else. It was a sacrifice to the very name of the Union. It has provoked a confidence that may be fatal. I fear it has given rise to a delusion, that there are no limits to which the North may not go.

Another bill was brought in by the honorable Senator from Wisconsin, well guarded in its provisions, in relation to New Mexico and California, proposing to extend the Constitution, as far as its provisions were applicable, to those Territories; and to establish courts to enforce them and other fundamental laws. It was assumed on that occasion that it conceded too much to the South, and gave them the advantage in the issue. Was not that going far in the spirit of compromise? Could anything more strangely show the wantonness of non-slaveholding arrogance? That was set aside, and a clause with a snare under it was insisted on by northern gentlemen as giving all that would settle the question; in other words, a clause to cover the Wilmot proviso. Sir, the compromises have all been one way—into the lion's den—*nulla vestigia retrorsum*. But I shall go further and say, we have violated none of the compromises into which we have entered, whilst we have rejected none that have been offered to us on honorable terms. We have been forced to a position which we must hold, and we must not be blind any longer by faithless compromises and heartless professions.

Is this not a proposition full of meaning? It may be that the cup of conciliation is exhausted. I shall say nothing of that. I will not utter menace, nor will I indicate the end of this fearful question. We have acceded to all that would preserve our honor in every compromise that has been proposed. Indeed, we have evinced a desire to let this question pass by, on a point of honor, and yet gentlemen come out and accuse those who have maintained those compromises, and manifested a desire to defend their rights, of a design to sever the Union. Oh yes, we are the people, they say, who have shown a disposition to sever the different portions of this Union! It is the wolf taking

offence at the lamb, because he contradicted him in saying he had not muddied the water in drinking below him.

The South, at the time of the formation of this Confederacy, made sacrifices, and deprived herself of the sceptre. She parted with the sceptre when she consented to the formation of this Union, when she gave up to the North the power of regulating commerce by a mere majority. But I shall go no further into the history of this matter at present. I shall check myself, so far as the tendency of this argument is concerned; but I have much to say on it, and I go back to the honorable Senator from Ohio. The gentleman from Ohio is a Senator; he represents, in part, one of the largest States in the Confederacy, and, sir, his opinions are to be respected. I am satisfied that he, like many others, acts under the pressure of an *ex parte* constituency. They are exponents of those who have never looked except upon one side of this question. Many who come here are committed exponents of irresponsible masses. They are facile and publican politicians, who feel themselves bound to the law of obedience. They act in a channel that popular prejudice and irresponsible persons have made for them, and yet they talk of slavery. They get their places here by slavish submission. They violate the Constitution before they come here, by vows on an unconstitutional altar. As for any effect that might be produced by mere speaking, I would much rather address the people than their representatives. The people have no temptation to do what is wrong. They might be affected by a dispassionate appeal to their judgments. At least they could be approached as a tribunal that could review its judgment. They could have no interest to maintain an adversary position, where from feeling and duty they might wish to become friends. Politicians will play with topics as a part of a game, which the people would shrink from with horror could they see the consequences. I think it may be safely said that those who yield most to transient popular prejudice, and indulge in habitual expressions of love to the people, would betray them soonest if there were an adequate temptation. An accommodating spirit is generally associated with a facility in morality.

There are occasions on which I might expect statesmen and patriots to elevate themselves above those irresponsible influences, but the day has passed, I am afraid, when such men are to be found. And in making this statement I will not tear away one leaf from the history of the North. I will not deprive the North of an iota of credit that is her due. The past is secure, and I speak of it only in an historical point of view; but I will not sit here and hear doctrines expressed which in their consequences must degrade a portion of the Confederacy, and deprive posterity of the rights which we have ourselves inherited.

I will ask the Secretary to read a letter of the Senator from Ohio, because, as I have attributed to it an influence, the letter itself will furnish the evidence upon which I have based it.

The Secretary read as follows:

CINCINNATI, 1849.

MY DEAR SIR: I observe indications in various quarters of a disposition on the part of influential gentlemen to interpose difficulties in the way of cordial union between the old line democracy and the free democracy, by insisting on conditions to which the latter cannot agree without the sacrifice of principles which they hold far dearer than party success.

The free democracy, holding in common with the old line democracy the cardinal and essential doctrines of the democratic faith, believe that the time has come for the application of those doctrines to the subject of slavery, as well as to the subjects of currency and trade. They believe that slavery is the worst form of despotism. The ownership of one man by another is the most absolute subjection known to human experience. No Democrat, who has any real living faith in the great cardinal doctrine of democracy, that all men have equal rights by nature, and that the only legitimate object of government is to maintain and secure these rights, can doubt that slaveholding is grossly inconsistent with democratic principles.

It is not necessary to advert to the circumstances which, for many years, prevented either of the great parties of the country from taking any ground against slavery. It is enough that circumstances are now changed. The acquisition of Mexican territories has presented the question of slavery in new aspects. Heretofore the slave power was content with retaining slave territory as slave territory; now it seeks to subject free territory to the blight of slavery. This enormous pretension has led to a more general examination of the constitutional relations of the National Government to the slave system; and that examination has fastened the conviction on the minds of thousands and hundreds of thousands, that the government of the Union is bound to prohibit slavery in the territories, and to exert all its legitimate and constitutional powers to limit, localize, and discourage it, and especially to prohibit its existence in all places within the sphere of its exclusive jurisdiction.

This is the conviction of free democracy. They have announced it over and over again, and are pledged to govern their political action by it. This pledge they will undoubtedly redeem.

Now, what is to hinder the redemption of this faith by the old-line democracy? What shall prevent their bold and frank avowal of it? What should interfere with manly and straightforward action in consistency with it?

I can see but one thing—the alliance, so called, with the slaveholders themselves—the fear of losing their political support and influence in a Presidential election.

Now, it is very certain that no consideration of mere political expediency ought to induce the democracy to refrain from carrying out its own principles; and it seems to me equally certain that political expediency and duty at this time coincide.

For, what will be the cost to the democracy of the alliance of the slaveholders in a Presidential campaign?

To determine this question, it must first be seen what the slaveholders demand as the price of their alliance. This demand is easily stated.

It is non-intervention upon the subject of slavery. That is, northern men may think and act at home as they choose, and southern men likewise; but when northern men and southern men meet at Washington, either in executive or legislative capacities, they must not take any action against slavery, but leave the slaveholders at liberty to introduce slaveholding wherever they can.

This, if I understand it, is the ground of the Washington Union, which has been approved by a number of Democratic prints in the free States, and universally, I believe, as well it might be, in the slave States.

Now, it is my deliberate opinion that it is utterly impracticable to unite the democracy on this platform in the free States.

The free democracy can never accede to it; and maintaining, as they do, the cardinal doctrines of democracy, and occupying, as they will, a bold and independent position on the slavery question and every other, the people who love boldness and independence will rally around them in such numbers that it will be utterly impossible for compromising democracy to carry a respectable number of the free States, and they must, as heretofore, divide the free States with compromising Whiggism. Success, therefore, on the non-intervention platform is, for the old democracy, quite out of the question.

The free democracy believe in non-intervention, such as the Constitution requires; non-intervention by Congress with the legislation of the States on the subject of slavery. But neither the history of the country, nor the Constitution of the country, warrants non-intervention by Congress with slavery in territories and elsewhere, without the limits of any State, but within the exclusive jurisdiction of the National Government. Slavery in such territory or places cannot, under a strict construction of the Constitution, exist at all. Slavery in such territory or places ought at least to be prohibited by Congress.

I have regretted to see certain expressions attributed to John Van Buren, calculated to revive unpleasant feelings—such as, that the national democratic party is dissolved. I

would prefer to say, that the national democratic party is in process of regeneration—in progress, obeying that law of progress which all its doctrines recognize, from the old platform of non-intervention to the Jeffersonian platform of the very restriction and discouragement. It seems to me that the party in the free States ought at once to advance to the Jeffersonian ground, and there unite in indissoluble phalanx with their brethren of the free democracy. Let the party in the slave States advance to the same ground. Perhaps, in advancing, some may desert and go over to the Conservatives. Possibly in the slave States, the party must go into a temporary minority. Let it be so. The compensation will be found in the concentration, unanimity, the invincibility of the united democracy in the free States. Triumphant in the free States, and strong, by the strength of their principles, even in the slave States, the democracy can elect its national candidates, under such circumstances, in despite of all opposition.

Such are my views. I feel a strong confidence that time will prove their correctness. I am a democrat, unreservedly, and I feel earnestly solicitous for the success of the democratic organization and the triumph of its principles. The doctrines of the democracy, on the subjects of trade, currency, and special privileges, command the entire assent of my judgment. But I cannot, while boldly asserting their principles in reference to these subjects, shrink from their just application to slavery. I should feel guilty of shameful dereliction of duty if I did. You know what multitudes now sympathize with me, and how truly. It is this very fidelity to democratic principles which makes it impossible for them to compromise with slavery. What a melancholy spectacle it would be to see the democratic party embracing defeat by such a compromise, and thus making it necessary for hundreds of thousands of the truest Democrats in the land to choose between adhesion to party and adhesion to principle!

The counsels of the Washington Union tend to this, and in my judgment cannot be safely followed. I shall be very glad to hear from you on this subject, and meanwhile remain, truly, your friend.

S. P. CHASE.

J. G. BRESLIN, Esq.

Mr. BUTLER. Now, sir, who are in favor of union and who of disunion, according to the sentiments there expressed. The gentleman says it makes a sectional party in the programme of his party organization. The basis of his party is to proscribe the South, or to presume on desertion and treason. Its minority is the predicate of his whole sage superstructure of party organization. This is the emanation of the new-light politicians, who would throw into the shade of their contrast the statesmen who have preceded them. Those who go over to them are of the true faith, whilst those who adhere to their ancient privileges and constitutional positions are called deserters. Sir, the southern man who goes over on this question will be regarded as a traitorous sentinel, who has given up his constituents for hire. The South has its peculiar institution, and it is the duty of her representatives to defend it to the last extremity—it is the defence of our firesides. If I were to apply a meaning to the language used by the gentlemen, it would be very different from that which he has given. Oh, yes, these gentlemen who are for taking care of our slaves, who express so much sympathy for them, who are for universal emancipation, and who cannot listen to any proposition which falls short of what they in their visionary conceptions suppose will eventuate in the freedom of the whole human race, when applied to on the part of emancipated slaves, deny them soil upon which to rest the soles of their feet. They preach to the slave his right of rebellion against his master. So long as he can hold out to him the means of running away, they are ready and willing to countenance him; but when they become free, we find on the part of those gentlemen a hostility equal to the love they professed.

When John Randolph, a distinguished citizen

of Virginia—that State which gave to the gentleman's State its existence, with that ordinance which has been said to have been dictated by the very spirit of freedom, whilst in consequence it has been pregnant with mischief—Mr. Randolph gave freedom to his slaves, imagining that they would easily find a place of refuge in territory made free by Virginia. And what was the fact? They were driven out of Ohio at the point of the bayonet. But, sir, if they had gone into the State as fugitives from their master, in violation of the master's rights, they would readily have found a home.

**MR. CHASE.** Will the gentleman allow me to correct him as to a matter of fact? The emancipated slaves of Mr. Randolph are, at this day, living in Ohio. Ohio desires a homogeneous population, and does not desire a population of varied character. But she drives no person from her territory at the point of the bayonet or otherwise.

**MR. BUTLER.** When the emancipated slaves of Mr. Randolph first entered Ohio they were not permitted to remain. There has been some alteration made since, I believe, in the laws of Ohio. Whether they are now in that State I cannot say. I am merely stating an historical fact that they were not allowed to remain upon first entering the State. The gentleman cannot change the state of the case by his assertion, and he need not attempt to distort the facts, because I know the history to be as I have stated. Yes, sir, they have proposed and voted for—

**MR. HUNTER.** Will my friend allow me to set him right in regard to this matter? I understand that the executor of Mr. Randolph's estate paid nine thousand dollars for a farm for these emancipated blacks in Ohio, and when they went to take possession they were driven off by men armed with guns and pistols, and never permitted to settle upon the land that had thus been purchased for them.

**MR. BUTLER.** I thank my friend for this statement; it is a consuming refutation of what the gentleman has asserted. They reached Ohio only under the garb of being servants; they claimed their civil rights by appearing to be slaves to those who denounce slavery, &c. I believe that the only way to be received favorably in Ohio is for a man to represent himself as a runaway slave. In their wondrous philanthropy they give them protection if they represent themselves as runaway Slaves. But the gentleman from Virginia has given you the true history of this matter, and I do not stand corrected by any explanation that the gentleman from Ohio has given.

But I was about to allude to the views of gentlemen in regard to California, and I shall have occasion to speak of that hereafter. I have no doubt they suppose that slaveholders are to be prohibited from carrying their property there, and perhaps that blacks will be excluded altogether. I will put the question to those who propose this sublime doctrine—I will put it to the gentleman from New Hampshire, and I believe he is at least candid, I will do him the justice to say this—if the South send ten thousand slaves to-morrow to a free State, with a view to make them free, shall we not be permitted to do so? I do not believe the gentleman can answer the question. There is not, sir, a non-slaveholding State in the Union that would receive our slaves if we chose to send them there.

I myself have had an agency in sending some free people of color to Ohio; and they were better off under a tolerated existence in South Carolina, where their rights would not have been invaded by vulgar rildry, than in a situation in which they feel all the effects of exclusion—where freedom is talked of and where privilege is denied—where philanthropy in profession covers oppression.

It is the interference of these pseudo-philanthropists which has prevented the masters and mistresses of slaves from setting them free. We cannot do it now, sir, for we cannot send them into those States where the institution does not exist. Nor can we, according to the doctrine of these gentlemen, send them to California or New Mexico. Why, sir, if they were to go into any free State, do you suppose they would be tolerated? What is to become of these people in favor of whom there have been such sublime sermons preached, whose condition is the subject of such super-scribable zeal and solicitude? Those gentlemen have taken the blacks under their especial care. Baneful influences are exerted over them to make them dissatisfied with the condition in which they are placed, whilst there is no substantial mode pointed out to better their condition. The slave, under such influences, is made a rebel against his master, only that he may become an outcast and a pauper in the midst of his professed friends, but in fact real enemies. Incendiary publications are disseminated among them, and with a view to seduce them from their fidelity. Why, the very speeches which gentlemen make on this floor, I pay for in part under the post office arrangements in sending them to my State, that they may be disseminated and read by or to the blacks; those speeches by which they are to be rendered dissatisfied with their condition. I perhaps have no right here to allude to a remark of an honorable gentleman from a non-slaveholding State, and one of the most distinguished in the Confederacy, who declared to me once that you cannot better the condition of the slaves as a mass, if the relation of master and slave could be dissolved to-morrow. You cannot give them the rights of freemen. The free States have refused it. I speak of Pennsylvania particularly; I do not know how far the remark will apply to the other States. You give them but the name of freedom, but none of its fruits. The condition of the slave could not be bettered. But the gentleman has denied that the free States are by clubs and associations making efforts to affect the condition of the slave and his master. How do so many printed pamphlets find their way in the slave States? How have these incendiary publications found their way into South Carolina? Bundles of them have been found in our post offices. One individual has been indicted, but I forbear alluding to his case, as I would not control the administration of justice.

But, sir, in the case alluded to, there is reason to suppose that a combination has been formed to produce a revolution in South Carolina on the slave question. The pamphlets are now to be found, with an aim that cannot be mistaken. They are incendiary publications in every sense of the word, and written from the worst of motives. There is a gentleman (Mr. Barret) who has gone to South Carolina, and there was found in his pos-

session large quantities of pamphlets and other documents, which were calculated to produce a revolution in the South. He stated that he did not design their dissemination, but there they are in the post office, like a torch near a powder magazine, at this day.

Mr. HALE. Were they addressed to whites or blacks?

Mr. BUTLER. They were addressed, I suppose, to some of your whites—whites who think like yourself. That is the best answer I can make.

Mr. HALE. Then there are some persons of my way of thinking at the South.

Mr. BUTLER. Yes, there are some who travel from your part of the country, and who, having been fostered by our hospitality, have basely taken advantage of us, and committed treason against our institutions. It is certain that these papers are sent there with a view to be used. I do not know whether Babbitt is guilty or not. I shall make no charge.

The gentleman has declared that he is not aware that any persons are associated for the purpose of sending these documents. Indeed, I am happy to hear that he does not; but such documents are to

be found, and I am sorry to believe that some of these documents have been actually written by some of those persons who have removed from the South to Ohio. That they do write such documents under the sanction of an association, I have no hesitation in saying. The purpose and purport of the whole thing is, these men travel about under the ostensible calling of selling drugs, or collecting materials for a gazetteer, that these mischievous documents shall be disseminated; and I am sure the gentleman must regard them as mischievous, if he believes what he says, for he says that he is opposed to interference; and yet, sir, there is interference continually.

I had no idea of taking up the time of the Senate; but when I saw the gentleman from Ohio rise here in his place and preach harmony, and under the garb of moderation to cloak his real feelings, I could not refrain from making an exposure of his true attitude to the issues involved in the discussion.

I shall not say here what the South will do. The honor and interests of these States will be safe now in their own keeping. They have not raised the storm, but I hope they will not be terrified by it. They will meet it with regret, but without terror I think.

## REMARKS OF MR. JEFFERSON DAVIS.

Mr. DAVIS, of Mississippi, said: Mr. President, I do not know that I should have said anything upon this occasion but for the fact that the Senator from New Hampshire [Mr. HALE] has made several points, and announced them in connection with the fact that he is about to be absent from the Senate. His speech was quite in keeping, sir, with many he acts I have witnessed on the part of that Senator. It was characteristic with him to make a speech upon this subject just before he was to leave the Senate, that he may avail himself of it, as I suppose, in the region he is about to visit, as food for agitation, and as evidence of his prowess upon the floor. On this occasion, he has taken as his theme the defence of the factory laborer—the intellectual cultivation and excellent morality of his constituents; and in order to produce conviction, I thought it exceeding well, quite prudent, I will not say how necessary, that he should announce that it was his colleague, and not himself, who dwelt among and was to be regarded as the representative of so praiseworthy a population, so high in the scale of humanity, so moral, so intelligent and proper in all things. I thought it well, sir, that it was his colleague whom the honorable Senator located in the midst of such superior samples of humanity.

Mr. HALE. Will the honorable Senator permit me to interrupt him? I stated that my colleague resided in one manufacturing village of the kind I have described, and that I reside myself in another of the same kind.

Mr. DAVIS. I thought the Senator said it was his colleague who resided among these remarkable people; but as he has now corrected the statement, I can only wonder the more that, coming himself from the midst of a population so moral, so accomplished, and instructed, therefore to be supposed so regardful of the rights of others, so regardful of the Constitution as those he has the

honor to represent, he should make demonstrations such as he is constantly exhibiting upon this floor. I thought it well, as I understood him first, but now it assumes a more dubious form; and without the high eulogy which he delivered upon that population, and which I suppose he is to take home with him, I should have doubted their claims to such and so numerous virtues. I trust he will take home with him also the speech he delivered the other day upon this floor, in which he announced that all those petitions and memorials are a mere trick, intended for electioneering purposes; that this agitation is a mere game, intended to cajole the people; that it is all a very harmless matter; that it means really nothing, except to keep up an excitement, and secure votes to candidates at election time. I hope that the Senator will repeat that speech to these people when he happens to attend meetings whence these and similar resolutions go forth. When the people in that quarter of the Union are about to be lashed into fury against the institutions of the southern States by the promptings of fanaticism, and, as a moral and religious duty, are urged to assail that of which they know nothing, I hope that he will rise and tell them how mean a spirit, how corrupt a purpose, and how empty are the declarations which have provoked them to this madness. Let him tell them, as he told the Senator from Vermont, when he referred to the introduction of these resolutions, that it is a convenience to get up resolutions of the sort when a Senator is to be elected. I think, sir, this would be far better than any constitutional argument, or, if such thing could be supposed there, than any southern address which could be delivered. I think it would recall the patriotism and the justice even of the Senator's own constituency to a sense of their folly and rashness—recall them from their wild war upon the rights of others, and cause them to reflect how far

they had been made the unwilling instruments of mere demagogues, seeking to elevate themselves at their expense and the expense of the country, by means of exciting their jealousy and passion.

But the Senator makes another declaration which surprises me—not being very well informed in relation to his private history—that he is not a member of any of those associations which are operating in the North against the institutions of the South, and that he knows nothing of them. I am glad to hear it; and can now understand his declaration, that he knows of no associations for the purpose of printing incendiary publications, to be circulated at the South. We do know it, and it is strange that he does not. Why, sir, the New York Anti-Slavery Society sends out more publications, I believe, than the Senate of the United States. They are sent not only into the southern States, but, sir, that society has printed numerous publications for the express purpose of circulation in California; and the purpose has been avowed, by means of agents and publications gratuitously distributed, to prevent slavery from being admitted into the constitution of California. Not only this, but they are associated in close affiliation with similar societies in Great Britain and Scotland. They acknowledge the contributions of those societies to be applied to these very objects for which they are laboring, according to their own reports. It is very strange that we, who stand so far off, should know so much more in relation to these matters than the Senator from New Hampshire. Yet, sir, I am glad that it is so—that such is the fact—because it exonerates the Senator from New Hampshire from much of that culpability which we had heretofore assigned to him.

Mr. President, I always enter into the discussion of the slavery question with feelings of reluctance; and only because I am forced into it by those who, having nothing to do with, nevertheless indecently interfere in our domestic affairs, have I done so. Sir, it is a melancholy fact, that morning after morning, when we come here to enter into the business of the Senate, our feelings should be harrowed up by the introduction of this exciting and profitless subject, and we be compelled to listen to insults heaped upon our institutions. Sir, there is no man who comes here to represent his constituency for high and useful purposes, and who feels upon himself the obligation of his oath to maintain the Constitution of the United States; who could thus act, from day to day, for the purpose of disturbing the useful legislation of the country—for no other purpose than to insert another brand into the flame which every reflecting, sober man now sees threatens to consume the fabric of our Government. We of the South stand now, as we have always stood, upon the defensive. We raised not this question; but when raised, it is our duty to defend ourselves. For one, sir, my purposes are to keep down this species of excitement, both here and at home. I know the temper of those whom I represent, and they require no promptings to resist aggression or insult. I know their determination. It is well and deeply taken, and will be shown when the crisis comes. They make no threats against any one, and least of all against the Union, for which they have made such heavy and continued sacrifices. With them Union is a sentiment, not a calculation—they adhere to it with the tenacity of filial affection; but their adhesion

in no degree results from convictions of interest. They know their rights, while they feel their wrongs; and they will maintain the one, resent the other, if it may be, will preserve our constitutional Union; but the Union without the Constitution they hold to be a curse. With the Constitution, they will never abandon it. We, sir, are parties to this Union only under the Constitution, and there is no power known in the world that could dictate to my little State a Union in which her rights were continually disrespected and trampled upon by an unrestrained majority. The present generation, sir, will maintain the character their fathers won. They will know how to sustain the institutions which they inherited, even by civil war, if that be provoked. They will march up to this issue, and meet it face to face, though the world were in arms against them.

This is our position; you have not respected it. I know yours, and cannot respect it; and knowing it, I came to this session of Congress with melancholy forebodings—with apprehension that it might be the last of our Government. I still trusted, however, in the intelligence and patriotism of the masses, for I have long since said that I put no faith in politicians. I feel that they have raised a storm which they cannot control. They have invoked a spirit which they cannot allay, and dare not confront. And yet I believe that the honest masses, the descendants of the Franklins, the Hancocks, and the Adamses, if they saw our institutions about to be destroyed by a mean and captious exercise of the power of demagogues to press to a fatal extremity aggressions upon our rights by the North, would rise up in their strength, and would enforce the justice and obligations of the Constitution. This is no indication of any confidence which I put in their representatives; with them I am ready to meet this issue face to face; and if the representatives of that people think proper to sow the seeds of dissension, and to inflame the passions and prejudices of one section, whilst they drive the other by every possible provocation to the point of civil war, then all I have to say is, that the representatives of the South, true to their constituency, are prepared to meet the issue here and now. If this is to be the hot-bed of civil war, if from this as a center the evil is to radiate throughout our country, here let the first battle be fought! If gentlemen come here constantly to press upon us, strip us of our rights, to move the people of one section of the nation to hostility against the other, I hope that those who have brought the country to this crisis will meet the first test.

Mr. President, it is no part of the business of a southern representative here to deliver panegyrics upon the attachment of his constituents to the Union. We have proved our love of the Union and our devotion to it too often and too long to require such declarations. Let those who feel that it may be doubted make their declarations of fidelity to the Union; we have nothing of the kind to do. If the State of Vermont chooses to send to the Senate of the United States insulting resolutions relating to her sister States, let the Senators and Representatives of that State do their duty in relation to them; and as I say nothing against a sovereign State, I will only say to those Senators that I regret that Vermont has not now such constitutional scruples as actuated her in the war of

1812, and that she does not keep her resolutions within her own limits, in this war of sectional aggression, as she attempted to keep her troops during that war of national defence.

I regret that I shall have to part with many friends with whom I have uniformly acted in the Senate, upon the motion, now pending, to print these resolutions. I would agree to print them, however offensive they might be, if the State had sent them to the Senate. The State has a right to speak to the Senate, and be heard. But I accept the argument of the Senator from Georgia, which

has improperly, as it seems to me, been called special pleading, that they are the property of the Senators to whom they are directed, and I perceive no obligation requiring them to have been placed before the Senate. They are instructions addressed to them, with reference to their own duties, and might just as well remain in their own pockets as to lie upon the table of the Senate. I hold them to be unjust, to be untrue, offensive, insulting, treasonable to the Constitution; and I will not endorse them by my vote. I have thus briefly stated my reasons.